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Russia and Poland

THE CURRENT "suspension" of relations between the Soviet Government and Premier Sikorski's Polish Government in Exile merely underlines once more the sorest specific problem in war aims to confront the United Nations, and the folly of temporizing when the issues are clear. It is of course not the biggest or the toughest problem, but it is the problem which is most likely to precipitate division between Russia and the rest of us. This is the problem of her postwar western frontiers.

It is almost a year now since Moscow made it very clear that these frontiers must be approximately those which existed at the time of the German invasion in 1940, with certain rectifications westward into Hungary and Roumania. Since that time no positive statement of acceptance or denial or even postponement has come from either Great Britain or the United States. The agreements entered into last summer were equivocal on this matter.

For more than a year THE COMMONWEAL has been pointing out that the general virus likely to destroy what friendship there is between Russia, America and Britain is suspicion. On February 7, 1942, we were already demanding that something be done to get rid of this suspicion, which we saw poisoning relations from both sides. When the frontier question was treated in most of the press as a subject scarcely fit for discussion, last June, we insisted that the bull be taken by the horns and that an attempt be made to work out a solution which should not be utterly unjust. Only thus could suspicion in some part be allayed. The hope for such a solution lay, we believed, in some sort of regional federation, in which Russia would obtain the security in the west on which she insisted and still insists, while the peoples of the territories involved would not be entirely absorbed. But any agreement would have been better than none. On July 3 we wrote: "Stalin and his lieutenants have seen what a mess the democracies could make out of collective security; they are from Missouri, and will have to be shown next time. More than anything else this tension threatens the peace which will follow a United Nations victory." Because Britain and the US have done nothing, this is still true.

On June 19 we made a prophecy. The Russian "claims must not be admitted to the point of absolute possession, absolute absorption of these border peoples into the Soviet system, lock, stock and barrel. That would be tragic. But it would be equally tragic to spurn the Russian demands, for to do this would merely end in precisely the kind of total absorption we should seek to resist." Seeing the US and Britain were side-stepping the matter, Mr. Stalin has kept on his own adamantine way. Obviously his effort has been to do everything needed to secure absolutely the boundaries he said he wanted. Poles who might have objected and were in his power were executed as nazi spies. The minute General Sikorski's government really acted in a way to nettle Russia, Stalin broke off relations. And now there are clear indications that Moscow is toying with the idea of setting up its own Polish Government in Exile, which will be more "realistic" about the boundary question.

By taking a do-nothing attitude, the diplomacy of the democracies has blundered, and blundered badly, for now the chances of even a reasonable autonomy for the border peoples are very nearly hopeless. And our unwillingness to grapple with the dichotomy between national sovereignty and security has made it possible for the representatives of these border people to blunder themselves into an almost fatally weak bargaining position. Some political problems simply cannot be sidestepped.

Headaches of Empire

IT IS a curious coincidence that news of the refusal of the British Viceroy to permit William Phillips, our special envoy, to see Gandhi and Nehru comes at the very moment that the Moslem League is adopting new anti-Hindu resolutions. It is a reminder how difficult is the problem of India. And it is hard to believe that this timing can be attributed to any alleged British sympathies on the part of the Moslem leader, Mr. Jinnah.

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At their meeting the Moslems speak with pride of their cult of violence and criticize the Hindus for their non-violence and for taking up so much space in British Indian jails. The All-India Congress and the Moslem League continue at swords' points. Gandhi wants a free, united India; Jinnah insists on the division of India into Moslem and Hindu states. The British are maintaining that until these two factions, representing four-fifths of the Indian people, get together, nothing further can be done—at least for the duration.

However, admitting these and other genuine difficulties, what was to be gained from refusing audience with the real Hindu leaders, regardless of whether they were in political custody? Mr. Phillips was on a friendly mission and Britain is our most intimate ally. The Administration can be presumed to sympathize with the British in their political difficulties. Now the suspicion has been aroused that our ally has something to conceal, and we are reminded of Mr. Churchill's outspoken remark that he had no intention of presiding over the liquidation of the British Empire. Here indeed is one of the principal obstacles to the development of a convincing United Nations political ideology.

It is, of course, far more than a specifically British problem. The United States has far fewer problems of empire; yet we have not succeeded in setting up a specific series of our own positive war aims. The British policy of sitting on the lid in India may work for a time, but the doubts of the world's colonial peoples cannot be left in the air indefinitely. In a war like this we cannot do without their much needed support. We have yet to convince the world that we believed wholeheartedly in our precious heritage of the partially realized four freedoms.

Showdown

JOHN L. LEWIS has alternately talked, scowled and no-commented. The coal mine operators have talked to anybody and everybody. Miss Perkins and Dr. Steelman, the famous and able mediator, have quietly grown more and more discouraged. The War Labor Board has intervened, Lewis has ignored it; sporadic strikes have broken out; the stage is now set for the showdown.

Inevitably one has the sensation of sitting in on an oversize poker game—a game in which all the players have declared themselves out except Lewis and President Roosevelt. (The WLB is studying its draw now, and it is our guess that it will throw in very shortly.) As for Lewis, he has a good hand and a better poker face. Ordinarily 450,000 soft-coal miners ready to strike would be enough to win against the toughest opposition.

But President Roosevelt has an excellent hand too—in fact, most of the aces. He has public opinion behind him, a war situation, the threat of inflation, somewhat more than 450,000 soldiers, and incidentally, justice. If he allows Lewis to bluff him out of the pot—a very fat one, by the way—it will be just too bad.

As a matter of fact, the poker analogy gives much too lighthearted an impression of our feelings on this question. Actually, we are greatly disturbed, and more than a little disgusted, at the spectacle of Lewis misleading American workers into a completely unjustified and irresponsible strike in the most essential of our war industries. Being the kind of man he is, Lewis will probably go through with a strike if his bluff is called. In that case we can only assure the President that as a consistently pro-labor publication we nevertheless support him in using every means at his command to break the general strike that will then develop in the soft-coal mines of this country.

We have said that justice is on the President's side. Recently a report of the Truman Committee emphasized again that the miners' demand for a wage increase is entirely out of order at this time. It revealed that under the new six-day week, with time-and-a-half for the sixth day, miners are now pulling down 50 percent more money than they did in 1941. On its part Washington has lately given evidence that it is making an effective effort to "hold the line" on prices. Under these circumstances nothing could be worse than an increase to the miners that would literally blow the top off the whole inflation control setup.

But apparently Lewis isn't losing any sleep over cloudy abstractions like justice or the public welfare. A tip-off on the way the man's mind works is the recent strike at the Celanese plant in Newark, sponsored by his catch-all District 50. For 12 days this strike held up production in 21 war plants, and yet the whole thing made absolutely no sense whatever except as a trial balloon to determine which way the wind from Washington might blow on the coal fight.

Fortunately, the government took a quick bead on the Lewis balloon and shot it neatly to the ground. Metaphorically speaking, we hope it will do exactly the same thing to the over-inflated balloon that is John L. Lewis himself. We are tired of the eyebrows, the sulky pout, the *enfant terrible* stamping his foot and howling for his own way.

Take him out to the woodshed, father.

Father Riggs

AFTER MANY months of ill health, Father T. Lawrason Riggs died at his home in New Haven on April 26. For 21 years he had been Chaplain to the Catholic students at Yale University, finally fulfilling his dream of establishing for them a permanent chapel and clubhouse. He was one of the original directors of The Calvert Associates, entrusted with administering the funds at that time raised to make possible the founding

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of THE COMMONWEAL; he long served as a member of our editorial council—until the change of management five years ago terminated the council's existence. He has ever been ready to help with advice, and himself contributed generously both in time and in money to the magazine's continuance. R.I.P.

Penn Station

YOU KNOW that the trains go out. The soldiers get in the trains and the trains go under the Hudson River and they come to the surface of the land in Jersey; they cross the waste lands and they carry the soldiers south and west. You know the map of America, the lines on the map connecting the cities. The trains follow the lines, carrying the soldiers, the sailors, the officers, the men. You know the station in the village. The kids are there to watch the Empire State Express go through. The local blows for the crossing round the curve where the road crosses the tracks to the old dock on the river. The local stops at the station; the conductor gets down and if there is someone from the village who is taking the train you see him get on the train, you see the conductor wave to the engineer, you see the train start moving and one car goes by you after another with the people leaning back in the seats, with a girl looking out of the window, and then the train goes into the cut and the sound of the steam is louder when the engine is between the walls of the cut and then the last car disappears from sight and the sound of the train is in the distance. You did not hear the kids while the train was in the station; the kids were watching the train: now the kids cross the tracks and go down to the river. The kids throw stones in the river.

You know what a station is for. You know what the Penn Station in New York is for. You cannot distinguish the words on the loud speaker but you know that the voice is telling you about the trains. You know that the soldiers are coming from camp, are going to camp. You know that the station means distance and separation. You know these things but you do not see these things. You do not see the trains. You do not see the trains come in or go out. It is only because you know about the trains, about the map of America, about the village stations in America, about the kids who watch the trains go by, about the sound trains make—when they start and stop, when they are picking up speed, when they are running fast, when they blow two longs and two shorts for the grade crossing—it is only because Americans know a lot about trains that you know also that these crowds in the Penn Station are going far away into America, have come from distant places in America to New York. It is only because you know about the war that you know also that these soldiers, these sailors—they walk toward the street, they walk toward the gates which lead to the trains—are journeying—no matter which way they walk—into the peril of war, into the great distances of this war.

This you know. You do not see this. You see only an uncountable multitude of men and women. The only place where you could try to count them would be when they come up on the escalator. Ten, twenty, thirty, forty. But if you count those who come up you are missing those who go down. Twenty, forty, sixty, eighty. What can you do with the thousands under the dimmed lights in the great hall with the information booth in the center and the ticket offices along the walls? What can you do with the thousands who stand waiting in the half darkness for the gates to open onto the stairs which lead down to the hidden trains? Thousands and thousands and each man and each woman moves with a hidden secret purpose; each man and each woman, the soldier, the civilian, the old man, the girl with a new hat and a new valise, pursuing a singular destiny. This grief, this joy, this fatigue, this secret human identity inhabiting separate bodies moving through the hall, over the quiet marble.

In the morning when the subway cars are filled going downtown and the streets are filled with men and women walking you know that the city is going to work. In the evening in the rush hour you know that people are going home to dinner. The crowds in the ball parks, you know why they are there, what they are watching. The crowds cheering the election returns, you know they are for or against. The crowds go into the cathedral, for Mass. When Mass is said the crowds come out of the cathedral. When great numbers of men are gathered together there is a single reason, a known purpose. The crowd that hangs a Negro to a tree, you know why the crowd is there. The crowds that fill the roads of Europe fleeing invasion, you know that they are driven, you know their single hope.

But in Penn Station there is this multitude and it is not united in a single purpose. The figures stand waiting, they move to or from the gates, to and from the street, the sailors go in for a drink at the bar, the sailors stand at the information booth, the soldiers stand with the sailors at the bar, the soldiers and sailors go up the escalator to the street, the soldiers and sailors move forward with the crowd to the gates which lead to the trains. Each one goes to his allotted destination. Each one is burdened with his own hope, his own regret, his own purpose. There is no loss of identity. This crowd cannot act as a crowd. Each man and each woman is alone in this crowd. In this station where the trains are concealed each man and each woman moves alone toward a single destiny.

C. G. PAULDING.

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Christianity and Democracy

The substance of a Jefferson Day address.

***By* Jacques Maritain**

THE SUBJECT which I should like to treat here is Christianity and democracy. I am aware that Thomas Jefferson's conception of Christianity was quite different from my own. Yet this very difference encourages me all the more to embark upon such a topic. For my purpose is to suggest that the living substance of the political philosophy dear to Jefferson may not only be preserved, but best assured and fostered in that religious outlook itself—based on an integral faith in divine revelation, but purified of any theocratic trend—which was indeed the object of his profound dislike; a dislike that I feel inclined to attribute to historical circumstances and prejudices, and also to some misinformation, rather than to a thorough examination of the question.

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The tragedy of the modern democracies is that they have not yet succeeded in realizing democracy. The causes of this failure are many. First, the enemies of democracy never laid down their arms, and their resentment, their hatred of the people and of freedom, have only grown in proportion as the weaknesses and mistakes of the modern democracies gave them more pretexts. Finally there was a coalition made between the interests of the leader classes, corrupted by money, desperately clinging to their privileges, and crazed by a blind fear of communism (the spread of which could have been prevented only by a clear-sighted policy of social reform), between the interests of the leader classes and the ambitions of sordid adventurers, as well as the slave philosophy taught in all the countries of Europe by utopists eager to see their ideas realized through any possible means, or by sadistic racists, drunk with the joy of using the spirit to betray the spirit. At the very time when all the artifices of intellectual intimidation were bringing this sham ideology to its greatest efficacy, the youth of the democratic countries was engaging in an examination of conscience from which it would have come forth a few years later with renewed strength. But the first effect of this was to develop doubt and hesitancy, and that youth was to finish its examination of conscience in prisons and concentration camps, and in an heroic resistance to the beast that is trampling Europe.

Another great reason for the failure of modern democracies to realize democracy is the fact that such a realization demands necessarily to take place in the social order as well as in the political order, and that this requirement has not yet been fulfilled. The irreducible antagonisms inherent in an economy founded upon the self-propagating power of money, the selfishness of the monied classes, and the secession of the proletariat, erected by Marxism into a mystic principle of the revolution, all have kept the democratic tenets from passing into the life of the society: and the impotence of modern societies in the face of poverty and the dehumanization of work as well as their inability to overcome the exploitation of man by his fellows have been a bitter failure for them.

But the main reason is one of a spiritual nature. It resides in the inner contradiction and tragic misunderstanding of which the modern democracies have been the victims, particularly in Europe. In its essential principle, the form and ideal of democracy is inspired by the spirit of the Gospel and cannot subsist without it. In virtue of the blind logic of historical conflicts and of social memory, which has nothing to do with the logic of thought, we saw the leading forces in modern democracies repudiating both the Gospel and Christianity in the name of human liberty. On the other hand, we saw the leading forces in specifically Christian strata combatting democratic aspirations in Europe for over a century in the name of religion. In France, the labor movement of 1848 was animated by a flame of Christian feeling, however smoky this flame may have been. The free-thinking bourgeoisie simultaneously smothered both the movement and the flame. The nineteenth century saw the consummation of the great scandal of which Pius XI spoke. The working classes were seeking their salvation in the denial of Christianity; conservative Christian circles were seeking theirs in the denial of the material foundations and the temporal requirements of justice and love. Soon, throughout Europe, panic-stricken leaders were to hold up an absurdly false dilemma before their followers. They claimed that men must choose between communism, which sought to expel God, and fascism which sought to enslave and regiment Him, to corrupt religion in souls, and to "de-

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Christianize the Church herself." This state of affairs was to reveal the frightful paralysis, caused by the contradiction of which I have spoken, both of the Christian spirit and the democratic spirit in the temporal life of peoples. It also made clear the disaster brought about in modern democracies, by the divorce between the Christian and the democratic principles. The war has tragically awakened men. If the democracies are to win the peace after having won the war they will do so provided that the Christian inspiration and the democratic inspiration recognize each other and become reconciled.

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What then are those thoughts and profound aspirations awakened in the depths of the conscience of peoples by the Christian message, and which have traveled underground for centuries before coming to light? However badly understood or distorted they may have been during their hidden journey in the secular conscience, just what are those truths of evangelical origin which the secular conscience has henceforth connected and identified with the very idea of civilization?

If we seek to consider them in themselves, freeing them from any erroneous context, we shall say that, by virtue of this hidden work of evangelical inspiration, the secular conscience has understood that human history does not turn in a circle, but is directed toward a goal, and proceeds in a certain direction. Progress is not automatic and necessary, but threatened and thwarted; it is not due to an advent of pure reason which would invalidate all that was inherited from the past, but that heritage itself is what increases, groaning under the labor of all the human and divine energies in man. What has been gained for the secular or profane conscience, if it does not swing to barbarism, is faith in the onward movement of mankind.

Under evangelical inspiration, often ignored but nevertheless active, the secular conscience has understood that the human person, while being part of the state, yet transcends the state because of the inviolable mystery of his spiritual freedom, and because he is called to the attainment of goods which are absolute. The state's reason for existing is to help the human person achieve the conquest of these goods and of a life truly human. What has been gained for the secular conscience, if it does not swing to barbarism, is faith in the rights of man, as a human person, as a person engaged in social and economic life, and as a working person; and it is faith in justice as being the basis of communal life and as being an essential property of the law, which is not a law if it is unjust.

Under the inspiration of the Gospel at work in history, the secular conscience has learned the dignity of the people and of the common man. The people is not God, the people does not possess an infallible reason, the will of the people or the spirit of the people is not the rule which decides what is just or unjust. But the people is the slowly prepared and formed body of common humanity, the living patrimony of the common gifts and promises made by God to His creatures—which are deeper and more essential than all additional privileges and social differentiations—and of the like dignity and like weakness of all members of the human race. It is only by existing in the communion of the people that any effort can bear fruit, or that the inspiring leadership which the people needs, can keep both its vitality and its legitimacy. Awakened by the movement of civilization to a consciousness of himself, the common man knows today that his day has dawned, provided only that he triumph over totalitarian corruption and be not devoured by it; he knows that the idea of a class or race hereditarily constituted to be the master and dominator, must make way for the idea of a community of men equal in rights and in work, and of an élite of the mind and of work which will arise out of the people, without cutting itself off from the people, and will be so to speak the flowering and luxury of its energies. What has been gained for the secular conscience, if it does not swing to barbarism, is the sense of the basic equality of men in nature, and of the relative equality which justice must create amongst them, in the participation of everyone, according to his capacities and deserts, in the common task, and in the common heritage of civilization.

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In virtue of the hidden work of the evangelical inspiration, the secular conscience has understood that the authority of those who govern, by the very fact that it derives from the author of human nature, is meant for free men and is exercised by virtue of the consent of the governed. For the Christian the dictates of authority bind in conscience because authority has its source in God; but from the very fact that authority has its source in God and not in man, no man or special group of men has in itself the right to command others. The leaders of the people receive that right from the principle which creates and preserves nature, and receive this right through the channels of nature itself, that is to say through the consent or will of the people or of the body of the community, through which authority always passes before it is invested in the leaders; and it is as vicars or representatives of the multitude that the holders of authority lead the multitude; and it is toward the common good of the multitude that they must lead it. What has been gained for the secular conscience, if it does not swing to barbarism, is the conviction that authority, or the right to wield power, is held by the governments of the earthly

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commonwealth only because this authority manifests the common consent in them, and because they have received their trust from the people; and it is the conviction that the normal state toward which human societies must tend is a state in which the people act as an adult person, or one come of age in the political life.

In virtue of the hidden work of the evangelical inspiration, the secular conscience has learned that the political domain and the flesh and blood paraphernalia of the things that are Caesar's must nevertheless be subject to God and to justice. It has understood that all the art of dominating and all the crimes used by princes and leaders of nations to conquer and consolidate their power can indeed give them power, but always turn out for the misfortune of the peoples. Once man has understood that, in reality politics depends on morality because its end is the human good of the community, he sees at the very same moment that to want justice and law in politics is to want a great revolution which will replace the politics of power for the masters, men, states or nations by the politics of the common good, over which the people itself must watch, as being the main party interested. A community of free men cannot live if its spiritual foundation is not, essentially, law. Machiavellianism and the politics of domination, which consider justice and law as sure means of losing everything, are the born-enemies of a community of free men. What is gained for the secular conscience, if it does not swing to barbarism, is its condemnation of the politics of domination and of iniquitous and perverse means of ruling nations; it is the profound feeling that justice fosters order, and that injustice is the worst disorder, and that the cause of the well-being and freedom of the people and the cause of political justice are substantially connected.

Under the evangelical inspiration, often ignored, but nevertheless active, the secular conscience has awakened not only to the dignity of the human person, but also to the aspirations and the urge which are at work in the depths of man. The person, in itself a root of independence, but plunged into the constraints that come from material nature within and outside of man, tends to overcome these constraints and to achieve its freedom of autonomy. When it is known that we are all created for blessedness, death no longer holds any terror; but then it is impossible to become resigned to the oppression and enslavement of one's brother, and one aspires, for the very life of mankind on earth, to a state of emancipation in conformity with man's dignity. What has been gained for the secular conscience, if it does not swing to barbarism, is the conviction that the forward march of human societies is progress toward the conquest of a freedom conformable to the vocation of our human nature.

Finally, under the inspiration of the Gospel at work in history, the secular conscience has understood that amidst the misfortunes and sufferings of our existence, crushed as it is by the iron laws of biological and economic necessity, and by the weight of men's pride, injustice and wickedness, one single principle of liberation, one single principle of hope, one single principle of peace can stir up the mass of servitude and iniquity, and can triumph over it, because this principle descends into us from the creative source which created the world and is stronger than the world: namely that brotherly love whose law, a scandal to the mighty, was promulgated by the Gospel, and which is, as the Christian well knows, the charity of God poured out into the hearts of men. Once the heart of man has felt the sweetness of this awesome hope, it is troubled for all time. The human race was exalted by this hope, and can lose it only by becoming more fierce than before. This hope is holy in itself. It answers the deepest, most solidly rooted desires of human nature. It places souls in a communion of suffering and impatience with all who are oppressed and persecuted. It calls for heroism. It has a divine power for transforming human history. What has been gained for the secular conscience, if it does not swing to barbarism, is faith in the brotherhood of man, a sense of that social duty which demands compassion for man in the person of the weak and the suffering, and the conviction that the political task par excellence is that of rendering common life better and more fraternal, and of working to make the structure of laws, customs and institutions of this common life into a house for brothers.

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It is in its radical opposition to the philosophy of enslavement, in other words, to totalitarianist philosophy, that the democratic philosophy of man and society most clearly reveals its essential characteristics. Though personally involved in the traditions of the great landowners who possessed slaves, Thomas Jefferson sought to abolish slavery as a general practice. And this condemnation of slavery is at the very heart of democratic philosophy. This philosophy can be recognized in the traits to which I alluded a while ago; inalienable rights of the person; equality; political rights of the people whose consent is implied in any political régime, and as vicars of whom the leaders govern; absolute primacy of the relationships of justice and law at the basis of society; an ideal not of war, prestige or power, but of improvement and emancipation of human life, and of brotherhood. For that philosophy, the political task par excellence is one of civilization and culture. It tends primarily to bring about the common good of the multitude, in such a way that the concrete person, and not merely a privileged class

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but the whole mass of the population, will really accede to the measure of independence suitable to civilized life, and which is ensured at the same time by the economic guarantees of work and property, by political rights, by civic virtues and the cultivation of the mind. Democratic philosophy does not admit that the state is a transcendent power which gathers up within itself every authority and imposes it from above onto human life; it demands that autonomous organs, enjoying an authority proportionate with their functions, spontaneously emanate from the civic community and the tension that exists between its various activities; and that the state be merely the highest organ of regulation, the object of which is the common good taken in what concerns the whole as a whole.

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After that shall we make a point of defining the form of government to which the principles of the democratic political philosophy naturally tend? This philosophy maintains that the human person as such is called to participate in political life and that the political rights of a community of free men must be solidly guaranteed. That is why it claims the right of suffrage for every adult citizen of whatever race or social condition and likewise demands that a juridically formulated constitution establish the fundamental laws of the régime to which the people have expressly decided to submit their political life. The principles of the democratic philosophy of man and society can be satisfied by a constitutional form of monarchy or oligarchy, but it is toward the republican form that they tend, as being their most natural expression: a form of government in which the legislative power must be exercised by the representatives of the people, and the executive power by delegates directly or indirectly designated by the people and supervised by the people.

According to a current formula democracy is described as the sovereignty of the people. This expression is ambiguous, for, in truth, there is no sovereign or absolute master in a democracy. It would be better to say that democracy is that régime in which the people enjoys its social and political majority, and uses it to direct its own affairs, or again that it is the "government of the people, by the people and for the people," which means that the people is then governed by men it has designated for functions of a determined type and duration, and over whose management it retains specific control by means primarily of its representatives and their assemblies.

The error of individualistic liberalism had been, in principle, to deny the elected officers of the people any real right to command, under the pretext that everyone should obey only himself. These elected officers then became the holders of power without real authority, and at the very moment when they were governing the people, they had to make the people believe that they were merely its passive tools. In reality the elected officers receive their trust from the people and must govern in conjunction with the people, but, within the limits of their functions, they are invested with real authority. They enjoy a real right to be obeyed. In emphasizing this point, I wonder whether I am not departing from some ideological tendencies of Jefferson, who sometimes seemed to distrust the very idea of government; but I am sure I am not departing from his practical convictions as a statesman.

Another error of Rousseau's political philosophy and of subsequent pseudo-individualism was that of reducing the community to a myriad of individuals in the face of an all-powerful state in which the individual will is supposed to be annihilated in order to be mystically reborn in the form of a general will; of excluding the existence and autonomy, initiative and rights proper to any group or community of a rank inferior to that of the state, and, finally, of suppressing the very notion of common good and common task. These errors which corresponded to the rise of the bourgeois class and ideology, far from being closely linked with democracy are destructive to democracy. They paved the way for totalitarianism. In freeing itself from them, a new democracy will return to the authentic principles of democratic philosophy.

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This new democracy must not only proclaim in a more or less symbolic manner, but foster in reality, and be really animated by, trust in the people, in the plain people. As I pointed out a while ago, such trust does not proceed from the rationalistic and romanticist optimism which prevailed at the end of the eighteenth century. It proceeds from a realistic and sober appreciation of the aims and conditions of political life. Moreover, willy-nilly, there is no other way out for freedom and civilization, the main historic fact developed during the present crisis being the fact that the ruling classes in Europe have obviously appeared morally bankrupt and that their privileges will be done away with. One of the distinctive features of American civilization, on the other hand, is that, despite the power in fact enjoyed by the groups of men or of families which control economic life, these groups do not constitute a class in the European sense, that is to say, deep-rooted in history, hereditarily stable and possessing a powerful moral and social cohesion. Because, in coming over to this country and leaving the Old World, men also leave the past, and, so to speak, blot out the nightmare of history; they doubtless get rid of a treasure of historical experience, but they also get rid of the poisonous

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resentments, hatreds, rivalries and prejudices conveyed by the century-old history of social groups and nations.

American civilization is not a class-structured civilization, it is, by virtue of its deepest incentive and inspiration, a civilization of the common man and of his dignity. Here, in my opinion, lies the hope that a Europe which will undergo profound revolutionary changes and an America to which the present world ordeal will also bring deep changes, but probably less drastic in the social realm, can be wholeheartedly united and cooperate in the building up of a new democracy, based on the sense both of the dignity of the human person and the dignity of the common good, and decidedly putting its trust in the people.

As I pointed out at the beginning, the considerations I have just laid down proceed from another conception of Christianity than Jefferson's conception. Yet I believe that taken in themselves these considerations are in agreement with his political philosophy. I am not pretending that they give a complete picture of all the particular features of this philosophy, far from it! But I believe that they correspond to its basic principles and to the lasting substance it conveys to us. And in this very fact I find a stimulating lesson—I mean a proof that the genuine democratic philosophy of man and society, which is a fruit and achievement of our Judeo-Christian civilization, can gather together, to agree on its basic statements as well as to cooperate in the common task, men sharing in quite different religious inspirations, from the most orthodox forms of Christianity to the merely natural outlook of those "ethical culture societies" of which Thomas Jefferson, as Professor Francis Philbrick put it, would almost certainly have been a member today.

Last Days on a Farm

***By* Albert Eisele**

ON THE DAY of the sale Martin Ellis and his wife arose before daybreak, and when Martin went outdoors he saw that there was not a star in the sky. The air was motionless, and in the lantern's light no snowflakes were visible.

The break of day revealed skies that were low and heavily clouded. By eight o'clock the near neighbors began arriving—those good neighbors who for the past several days had been helping the Ellises get things lined up for the sale. Of course the Ellises had a helper, an elderly man whom they had hired when their only son, Stephen, had gone to war and after they themselves had decided to have a sale and move to town, but the preparations for a farm sale entailed a tremendous amount of work, especially when the sale bill read, "106 Head of Livestock." For that was what the Ellises were offering for sale on their quarter-section farm—5 horses, 26 cattle, 55 hogs and 20 sheep. And there was also the poultry—200 hens, 5 geese and a flock of guineas. All this livestock and poultry had to be well fed and cared for prior to the sale, so as to be in good condition for the selling ring. Horses had to be curried, and cattle, hogs and sheep bedded down heavily and kept clean. Machinery needed to be dug out of snowbanks and hauled into line; harnesses repaired and oiled; clover seed sacked, tools sorted over and many other details looked after. It was the volunteer help of the near neighbors that made all these sale preparations easier, but even so, when the sale date arrived both Martin Ellis and his wife found themselves pretty well fagged out.

They watched the weather anxiously. "Just so it doesn't start storming now," said Martin. "If we have to postpone our sale, then we'll have to get ready all over again.

But the weather continued at an even keel, and by ten o'clock people began arriving for the sale. Neighbor boys served as traffic officers and directed the cars into a pasture, where the cars lined up just as in the parking spaces at county fairs or cornhusking contests. By noon the place was swarming with people, and then it was time for the free lunch. "Come and get it!" bellowed Izzy Grabowski, a neighbor to the Ellises and also the champion hog caller of the township. Large cardboard boxes were emptied of buns; kettles of hot weiners disappeared, and wash boilers of coffee, not too strong but at all events hot, was distributed in tin cups.

At one o'clock the auctioneer climbed upon a hayrack that was piled with things to be sold. "Now men," he began, "you all know why we are here today! We are here today because Martin Ellis is selling out—his boy has gone to war and Mr. Ellis and his wife are too old to carry on alone. They've worked hard for a good many years and they've prospered, and now they can move to town and spend the rest of their years in peace and comfort. Mr. Ellis has a full line of farm machinery, and as fine a bunch of livestock as ever I've seen on a quarter-section farm. Every-

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thing is to be sold—nothing held back and no by-bidding—everything goes to the highest bidder, and I'm going to work hard to get every possible cent for Mr. Ellis, just as I'll work hard for you, too, when that happy day comes when you can sell out and retire. Let's make it a good sale today—times are good for you farmers, and if you haven't got quite enough money on hand why the banks are full of it and they'll be glad to lend you some. Now then, I guess that's about all that I've got to say—the terms are the usual terms—everything under ten dollars cash, and over that amount we'll take your note. And now we'll open the sale—" and here the auctioneer took a horse collar and calmly placed it on the shoulders of the clerk, an elderly and weazened little banker who, with his head thrust through the horse collar, blinked at his audience like some huge owl. The auctioneer went on: "There was once a great big man who went into a department store and said, 'I want to buy a collar.' 'What size?' asked the saleslady. 'Twenty,' said he. 'Tenth floor,' said she. And the great big man went to the tenth floor, where he found—a harness shop!" A gale of hearty laughter greeted this joke, and the auctioneer, permitting the clerk to model the collar the while, sold the item for $1.65. The sale was on.

All the many things on the hayrack—the horse collars, the harnesses, tools, smaller implements, shovels, pitchforks and so forth—were sold in lively bidding, the farmers in their heavy overcoats crowding near in the fashion of women bargain hunters in the cartoons. When the hayrack had been cleared the hayrack itself was sold, next the running gears under the hayrack, and then the sale moved on to the farm machinery.

The corn planter was sold; the disc harrow was sold, and the shotgun seeder, the corn cultivator, the quack digger, the binder, the haying implements, the wagons, and so on down to the swill barrels, swill pails, and the hog troughs. Last item was a wheel-barrow—"Sold! To that gentleman right there!" "He calls me a gentleman!" said the buyer, "he'll have to take that back! Ha ha!"

★

The sale moved on to the livestock, with the horses first. Daisy, a fine young mare, was brought out and a sale ring formed. "Tell the crowd about the mare, Martin," said the auctioneer. "This mare," said Martin in a voice that sounded timid and subdued in contrast to the auctioneer's vocal power, "is five years old, sound, and well broke."

It was going to be harder for Martin to see Daisy sold than any of the other four. Not only was she a splendid specimen, but she was a direct descendant of old Belle, the first mare that he had ever owned. He had bought Belle when he started farming; that was some thirty years ago, and she had raised him many colts. He had a picture of her, with one of her young foals, and he himself was on the picture—it had been taken in front of the barn by a wandering photographer who, he remembered, wore a shiny suit. . . . Daisy was sold. The next three horses were sold, and then old Bob was led into the ring. Bob was old and slow; the auctioneer gave him a sharp rap across the back with his cane and there was a leathery report, as if the blow had fallen upon an invisible saddle.

And now the horses were all sold (thank heaven!) and the milk cows were next. A light snow was beginning to fall through the motionless air. A sale ring was formed with a stable door incorporated at one end, and from this stable door there emerged into the ring a milk cow. She was Number 1—the eight cows were all numbered with numerals cut from a large calendar and pasted upon the back. All the cows were sold, and then the young heifers, and the calves, and the bull. The auctioneer next led the crowd to where the sheep were penned into four lots of five head each. The snowfall had increased in density, and the flakes were now like small feathers. Martin, as he followed the auctioneer, saw that the man who had bought Daisy had already hired a truck, had backed it to the barn and loaded the mare. That particular man had come to the sale to buy a horse and, having gotten what he wanted, for him the sale was over. He had paid the clerk; the weather looked threatening, and so he had hurriedly loaded his new horse and was now ready to go. Yes, there he started away! That was the last of Daisy! Martin didn't even get a chance to bid his beloved mare goodbye.

★

Some of the sheep were in the open, in pens against a small shed, and the snow fluttered down into their pelts as the voice of the auctioneer rang over the constricted scene. The sheep were sold—there was getting to be a monotony about the sale now: the horses were sold, the cattle were sold, the sheep were sold—it reminded one of those scriptures where, from all the various tribes, ten thousand signed.

And the hogs were sold. The crying was done inside the hoghouse. "There's hog cholera on this place, or has been within the past five years. I can smell it!" announced one farmer who hadn't been able to get inside to see the selling. He, with others of the overflow crowd, waited outside, the voice of the auctioneer indoors muffled by the snow-laden roof.

The crated chickens were sold, and the geese and the guineas, and also some household goods that had been set outside the house. And then the sale was over. The clerk went to the house, to get out of the weather; he took a table, and the buyers came in to settle their accounts; the auctioneer

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came also to the house, for his work was ended and he had ordered a large pot of coffee—there was something about crying a sale that always left him with a craving for coffee, and he drank usually from fifteen to eighteen cups after every sale.

But Martin Ellis did not come to the house. He was too busy helping the buyers load the stuff that they had bought. Everywhere trucks were backing up to buildings, or maneuvering and roaring about the farmplace. A man who had just loaded a horse came up and said, "I forgot to ask you the horse's name?" Another man said, "I bought that big roan cow and when I loaded her she kicked—is she a kicker?"

Others were taking their purchases home in cars. Scoop shovels, tools, pails, bags of seed were placed in back seats or in trunks. Crates of chickens were tied to runningboards. One farmer, who had bought four small calves, packed them into the back seat of his car and drove away.

By nightfall the trucks all had left, and the auctioneer had departed, and gone also were the clerk and all the people. But not all of the 106 head of livestock had been removed. Two horses remained—as Martin said to his wife that evening; now he had a team, just like when they started farming. Four cows also remained, and these had to be milked. Martin milked them. Some hogs were left, and these had to be fed. The sheep had all been trucked away, and the poultry likewise.

The next morning Martin arose at his usual hour, went outdoors and milked the four cows, fed the two horses and the hogs. The snowfall had ceased, and there was no wind and no drifting. Trucks plowed their way through the soft snow, and by nightfall no animal remained on the farmplace except a 200-pound shoat. This they had kept for butchering. In the week or ten days before they moved, they would butcher this shoat and take the meat along to town.

On the second morning following the sale Martin arose and went outdoors. Ah, but this morning there were no chores! For the first time in thirty years there were no eternal chores demanding attention! He fed the butcher hog and then went back to the house, where he lounged all day, smoking his pipe and toasting himself around the kitchen fire.

On the third morning following the sale Martin got up at his usual time and went outdoors. He fed the butcher hog. Then he went to the barn. But the barn was empty and silent. So was the calf pen and the henhouse. He went back to the hoghouse, and the butcher hog greeted his return with a series of enthusiastic grunts. Well, so the butcher hog was lonesome too? He reached down and scratched the butcher hog behind the ear.

At noon he went out and gave the butcher hog its dinner, and he hung around the pen, from time to time scratching the butcher hog behind the ear. The butcher hog seemed grateful for this attention.

The next morning he fed the butcher hog as always, and then decided to put in fresh bedding, though the pen hardly needed it. He got straw at the stack, digging it out in bright yellow forkfuls that smelled as fragrant and spicy as on the day of threshing. And that made him think of threshing time, and of the favorite team that he used to take threshing, and of the cows that used to frolic around the new strawstack and rub against its sides. And he thought of how the hogs and the sheep used to hang around the strawstack, and even of the geese that used to lay their eggs in the cave-like holes which, by the coming of spring, the cows had eaten into the straw. Yes, he remembered when they had a vicious old goose that used to lay eggs in a strawstack hole, and how Stephen once (he was about fifteen then) crawled into the hole to look for geese eggs but how the old goose, having turned broody, flew at him with beak and wings and how the boy came out much faster than he went in. Ha ha, Martin still had to laugh about that.

But it was lonely around the farm these days. Old McDonald had a farm all right, but the only thing left on that farm was a butcher hog; and one evening Martin's wife said, "Tomorrow I think we'd better butcher our hog. We'll be moving to town soon, you know, and we had better get the butchering out of the way."

So the next morning Martin took his rifle and his butcher knife and went to the hoghouse, while his wife waited for the report of the gun—she always waited like this: she didn't like the killing part of butchering; she always waited until the gun had been fired and the hog had stopped kicking before she went down and helped her husband drag the carcass to the driveway of the corncrib, where it would be cleaned of its bristles, hung up and dressed.

But this time she waited and waited, listening in vain for the report of the gun. At last she went down to the hoghouse to investigate, and there she found her husband seated on an upturned pail, the tears streaming down his face. "I can't kill this hog!" he sobbed, and she understood why that was so. And there was nothing that either of them could do about it.

Colorado and Labor

By Tim O'Brien

The following report on recent labor legislation in Colorado reflects a specific situation in one state which is common to several others. South Dakota, Kansas, Idaho and Texas have all passed laws of the same general nature as that described below by Mr. O'Brien. Similar legislation has been introduced in such states as California, Mich-

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igan, Ohio, Massachusetts and Connecticut, but in these states it has been defeated.

Like the anti-strike laws associated with Senator O'Daniel, such legislation unquestionably reflects a wide-spread campaign seeking to deprive labor of the established rights which it has won through federal enactments. The general scheme seems to be to nullify such federal law by means of state law. Of course all of this is symptomatic of general feeling against labor unions, of which those most interested are seeking to take advantage.—THE EDITORS.

ALTHOUGH industrial peace has reigned for years in Colorado, a Republican-dominated legislature passed and Governor Vivian signed what is called the Labor Peace Act. This Rickenbacker-approved bill is viciously anti-labor and anti-democratic to every intent and purpose. Its far reaching effect is just becoming known. There was no publicity given to the public hearings since those for and against the measure were allotted one hour and fifteen minutes each. Before enactment of the bill the Denver *Post* assured us all that the bill was designed for the protection of labor's rights. For the *Post,* this was one event in our times that wasn't born of bureaucratic bungling and one piece of social legislation that wasn't regimenting free labor. Smell the mouse?

Studying the bill one finds arbitrary powers given to an industrial commission which will enforce it. The commission, for instance, may exclude anyone from elections who has engaged in unfair labor practices, which could mean striking, picketing or other normally legal union activity, according to the terms of the act. At its own discretion the commission can call for an election at the insistence of employers or employees or their representatives. It can also refuse them. It has freedom to investigate candidates for office. It can send reporters to meetings. A brief analysis of sections will bear out the "peaceful" intentions of the bill.

In defining an employee, the act states that anyone guilty of unfair labor practices (under its terms) would cease to be an employee even though he or she continued to work and received wages regularly. In this manner of defining, whole locals presenting just demands could be stopped. Section 2 says the refusal of an employer to negotiate with employees does not constitute an unfair labor practice on the part of the employer, nor does it constitute a dispute which would call for intervention of the commission in behalf of the employees.

Another section states the reasons for which employees may be discharged, including the reason of "unsatisfactory service." Colorado labor leaders point out this is an old ruse and most union contracts have discharge clauses that are both fair and adequate. In the same section (sub-section 11) labor could be denied the right to engage in activities which have been upheld by the high courts and have been recognized as proper and lawful. These actions could include the promotion of union labels, withholding patronage from or refusing to handle the products of a company whose working conditions were intolerable. Ironically, the same bill which prohibits unionists from saying, "Do not patronize the John J. Smith Company," also says, "The rights of free speech shall not be invaded."

The company union seems to be accepted as legal. To quote verbatim section 2, sub-section 14: "The term 'company union' shall mean an organization of employees of only one employer."

According to an AFL analysis, employees in unions which have had negotiations with federal agencies, such as the Post Office Clerks, Letter Carriers, etc., are included under the Peace Act.

Ambiguous section 5 says that the bargaining agency chosen by a majority of employees shall be exclusively representative of all employees in said unit. Four lines following this provide that employees are entitled to present grievances in person or through a representative. Labor peace or chaos?

Though the Industrial Commission is empowered to investigate and determine those qualified to vote, there is no guide as to qualifications in the bill. What is to be determined? What qualifications? From whence the source of names? Is the check-up to be made in the shop, office or home? The act calls for the incorporation of unions, setting forth the methods for handling financial matters, elections, method of conducting meetings, etc. Trouble can only ensue when the State seeks to wield such power over many unions whose activities and procedure are governed by a national or international constitution.

Since the commission lays down the conditions for the establishment of and grants enumerated "powers" to unions, the right to organize is imperiled. A union would have to ask the state's permission for the right to strike, the right to agitate for increases and better conditions, the right of boycott, the right to help other unions in need, the right to recruit members, etc.

The Peace Act says anyone, no matter how long he has been a union member, shall be eligible to hold office. The candidate-to-be need only give forty days' notice. In a radio address over KFEL, the AFL State Secretary explains that most unions have clauses requiring membership in good standing from six months to one year as a condition for candidacy. This is reasonable. He told Coloradans this traditional practice is usually to prevent "packing" unions immediately prior to elections. It is a means of keeping subversives from grabbing control as they have a way of doing. Colorado, he says, is free from this menace.

Maintaining "peace" in Colorado will cost the taxpayers an estimated half million dollars an-

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nually. There are 800 locals covering over 45,000 unionists whose books must be inspected at least once a year. The cost of auditors' salaries will be around $60,000.

"No funds of any such corporation [union] shall be used directly or indirectly for political purposes of any kind." This is a restriction against even those unions which are not partisan but follow the old tradition of rewarding friends and punishing enemies. Labor out here asks: how about this in regard to employer groups, chambers of commerce and other private associations? Fees, fines and assessments are all subject to approval by the commission. Imagine this being foisted upon the American Legion, the Grange, the K. of C.?

A CIO official vowed to bring about a court test of the act. An irate state AFL convention voted a huge appropriation to combat the Peace Bill. Both federations are carrying on an intense campaign to arouse sentiment against an act ostensibly designed to eliminate a condition which does not exist.

Yes, there has been labor peace in Colorado for years. The sponsors of the Peace Act admitted this, though they have taken a step back—back to the days of Governor Peabody and the "Coal and Iron Police" of Ludlow. The labor movement is functioning smoothly in Colorado and lays claim to great achievement in the building of new war plants. It is a very inopportune time for reactionary legislators to disturb a wartime labor situation that is cooperative, peaceful and productive and making itself felt in the defense of the nation by participating fully in all civilian defense activities. There may be another Ludlow incident in Colorado. The state legislature has done everything in its power to precipitate one.

The Boy with the Rabbit

I thought of life our wanton hands had spilled
Throughout the years—arena, bull-ring, whipped
Slaves in their dungeons, Negroes caught and shipped
In roaring hells, the Hindu scourged, the home
Of seal or badger pillaged, offspring killed;
The wretch who, swishing poppies, wished that Rome
Had but one head to feel the blows he dealt—
Then how all tenderness, innate or willed,
Was a mere cipher in the monstrous tome
Of debt we owed to ravaged field and foam
And all wrecked forms the breath of beauty had filled.

The majesty, calm, of the long-suffering skies
Asking no retribution, the bright eyes
Of the boy stroking haunted me no less.
Dimly he seemed aware of all I felt,
And the shy creature climbing him who knelt
Dumbly returned the atoning tenderness.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON.

Communications

OKLAHOMA

Chestnut Hill, Mass.

TO the Editors: Please advise Mr. James N. Vaughan how distressed we were to read his review of "Oklahoma." He apparently liked it but unfortunately started off with a paragraph which would scare away potential customers.

We saw it here in Boston as "Away We Go" and raved about it. At that time we compared its clean, fresh, newness to the old George M. Cohan shows. It seems a shame that a Catholic periodical damns with faint praise the cleanest, nicest musical since "The Merry Malones." Why should a producer bother to "keep it clean" if we don't make it financially worth his while?

F. HIGGINS.

The Screen

Hold Your Hat and Toupee

AS HOLLYWOOD continues to use its best brains and money to turn out expensive war-related films, reviewers frequently find themselves on the spot in writing about them. In many of the recent pictures, Hollywood is saying the things that need to be said about the war, about the enemy and about the United Nations. What bothers the reviewer who wants to encourage the movie makers' good intentions is that the film's execution falters and in some cases isn't even good cinema. Recent examples of this were "Hitler's Children" and "Reunion in France." Three current productions illustrate this point.

"China" is meant to be a paean of praise for the brave people who have been making a courageous stand against their invaders. It wants to say that the guerrillas are doing a swell job of holding and harassing the Japs who are really a bunch of murderous, rapacious villains; it also wants to say that the Chinese youth are giving their all to their country and are grateful for whatever help comes from the outside. Director John Farrow did what he could with the material provided. The story is an implausible melodrama that tells about the regeneration of an American during one 1941 episode in the Chinese war. Alan Ladd plays this role with lack of conviction, not so much through his fault as through the badly written characterization. At the film's beginning this Mr. Jones is a hard-boiled, belligerent, arrogant egoist. He is held in contempt by the Chinese for selling oil to the Japs ("My business is with whoever wants it."), for showing no sympathy for the Chinese problem. Comes Miss Grant (Loretta Young), an American schoolteacher, and some ten Chinese young women, her students who spout speeches on the Chinese youth movement in first grade English. On a road jammed with pathetic refugees they demand a ride in the mean-spirited oil salesman's truck. Mr. Jones is at once attracted by Miss Grant. So is Johnny Sparrow, Jones's uncouth, but big-hearted assistant (played for comedy and emotion by William Bendix who clutches a cunning Chinese war-orphan baby

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to his hairy bosom in the best Hemingway manner). As you expect, having been to movies before, Mr. Jones is reformed—but not before the baby is brutally killed by Japs (buck-teeth, horn-rimmed glasses, sneers and all), more refugees are bombed, one of the students is raped (in a vividly harrowing scene). Jones joins the Chinese cause, proves a good soldier in an exciting raid. "He was a swell guy," says Johnny Sparrow tearfully after Jones sacrifices himself to hold off the Japs. Miss Grant tearfully says nothing, so overcome is she by grief. In spite of its melodramatics and bad script (written by Frank Butler), "China" has several moving scenes. We praise its honest intention, regret its ten-twenty-thirty execution.

Even more melodramatic and exciting is *"Hangmen Also Die,"* produced and directed by Fritz Lang. John Wexley's screenplay gets right into the thick of things at the beginning, and Lang starts with a bang on his well-set stage. It is May 1942 in Prague. Hitler's cruel hangman, Reinhard Heydrich, is ruthless in his executions of Czechs. Then suddenly he is shot. We know, but the Germans don't, that Dr. Svoboda (Brian Donlevy) is the killer. The city is in a turmoil. Nazi soldiers, Gestapo, members of the Underground, Curfew, Identification Cards, Hostages, Third Degree, Blood Bath! Should Svoboda give himself up? (The Germans promise the release of the 400 hostages if he does.) The Underground decides he should not. Director Lang conveys well the suspense of the manhunt for the executioner, the horror that went on in Prague as the Gestapo perpetrate their cruelties to squeeze confessions. All is exaggerated. Anna Lee is in a state of frenzy and confusion as the woman who aids Svoboda and then suffers doubly when her father is taken a hostage. Walter Brennan underplays the role of her father, the professor who never shows emotion, even in his farewell with his daughter or before the firing squad. Most of the Germans are overdone in a too melodramatic fashion. One officer cracks his knuckles and drools as he crossquestions suspicious Czechs. Another squeezes a pimple as he lays a trap. The most convincing of the group is the Gestapo plainclothesman (played expertly by Alexander Granach) who uses a superior malevolent intelligence as he gets closer and closer to his prey. Lang gives us thrill after thrill but he forgets that we can take only so much of suspense before jitters set in. When the film seems to have run its course and we are set for the delayed finale the story takes a new turn and we stay for more only because the excitement is growing even greater. The patriot Czechs throw the blame for Heydrich's death on Czaka, a brewer who is a Quisling and spy for the Nazis. Gene Lockhart plays the role of this cowardly traitor for all that's in it. He succeeds in making you dislike this man while you are shivering for him. Someone should have warned Fritz Lang that he should not crowd all his cinema tricks of horror into one film; 120 minutes of it is too much—especially if we are to remember the message.

"Assignment in Brittany" pretends to be no more than the hokum it is. It owes its excitement to its story (based on Helen MacInnes's novel), Jack Conway's fast direction peppered with many scenes of breath-taking suspense, and a young Frenchman who plays the lead with dash

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and charm. From its opening in which our hero knocks out an Arab and kills a Nazi officer until its high-pitched finale in which hero and heroine are rescued in France by British commando raiders (this last scene comes near being pretty silly when the heroine bursts into the "Marseillaise"), the film is a series of well-planned thrills. It is full of spying, counter-espionage, chases, escapes, sneering and brutal Germans, medieval tortures, brave men, helpless women. It is an old time swashbuckler in modern dress. Captain Metard is dropped via parachute in France to learn the location of a German submarine base. Because he looks like Bertrand Corlay, a Frenchman who is lying in an English hospital with a broken leg, he goes to this man's village to take up Corlay's life. Of course he has memorized the facts of the village and of the life into which he is stepping. But he did not expect to find Corlay's fiancée furious because of his mistress. What's more this mistress is cooperating with the Nazis more than is necessary. All this makes for tightened suspense and much quick thinking on the part of Captain Metard. Corlay's mother is the first to get wise; her son was obviously pretty much of a rotter, while his impersonator is as nice a boy as you'd want to see. And as portrayed by Pierre Aumont he is a curly-headed young edition of Jean Gabin. He is well supported by Richard Whorf, Margaret Wycherly, George Coulouris. Susan Peters, who caught the critics' and public's eye in "Random Harvest," plays the heroine like a painted doll. French girls in peasant dress just do not wear false eyelashes and manicured finger nails.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Racists All

IT WOULD be wonderful if man could act for the love of God and not because he fears death: it would be a fine thing if we could act in justice because of a love for justice; it would have been a fine thing if we had worried about the poor and the dispossessed before there were too many of them and the banks failed and the factories closed; it would have been a fine thing if we had brought the Negroes to this country as free associates of free men to join freely in the colonization of this land. This would have been a country wonderful beyond any words, beyond any preexisting example, had we been just to the Indians, charitably, and fraternally just to the Negroes, the Mexicans, the Japanese, the Chinese, the Puerto-Ricans, the Filipinos who have lived within the frontiers of our land.

We were not even just to the fine white-skins who came to this country from certified white countries such as Poland, Italy, Ireland. We did not even treat fraternally the bohunks, the wops, the micks. We permitted the most appalling human wastage to accompany the building of our country. And just so long as the country was expanding, just so long as you could get rich if you worked, nobody counted the broken lives, nobody calculated the wastage. We said it cannot be as bad as all that; look at the Irish, we said. They have fought through, they have won out. Look at di Maggio. The Portuguese and the Greeks, we said, look at them: they're not all selling apples. Look at La Guardia.

Well, you cannot pick up the pieces. We broke a lot of hearts. The immigration from Europe made us, and we broke a lot of hearts. But that's all over. That's water over the dam. The immigrants from Europe are Americans now. Yes, most of the Jews too. We've got what we've got: we've lost what we've lost. What's the trouble? What more do you want? We even started to worry about the poor—once we saw that the factories weren't running. We had the New Deal and Labor Unions and the SEC. And now we have the war.

Precisely. It is because we now have the war that we cannot possibly avoid evaluating our attitude of racial superiority to men within our land whose skin is yellow, or bronzed, or black. We can forget about the immigration from Europe because the immigrants have become Americans. We cannot—because of the war—forget that the Negroes in America are not precisely happy, that the Mexicans in America are not happy, that the Chinese in America are not anxious to do the laundry or cook for another hundred years, that the Japanese in America have been driven into isolation. We cannot forget that the Hawaiians, the Puerto-Ricans, the Filipinos have all been exploited for private American interests. We cannot forget that this war is a serious war and that it is impossible to play tricks in this war and to fight for justice while allowing injustice to prevail in our own national life.

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For one thing, the Germans will not permit us to forget it. The Germans will not permit the Chinese, the Mexicans, the Negroes to forget—even if they themselves would like to forget—that Americans do not consider them to be "brothers under the skin." The Germans are at work, our own conscience is at work, the anguish of those who suffer discrimination is at work. There is no way by which we can fight on through the war and into the peace unheeding this challenge of anger, this challenge of suffering, this challenge of conscience. We have now, during the war, to make up our minds once for all whether or not we mean to make it possible for men, whose skin is visibly different in color from our skin, to live in our country in real freedom, in effective freedom of opportunity, in indisputable community of justice.

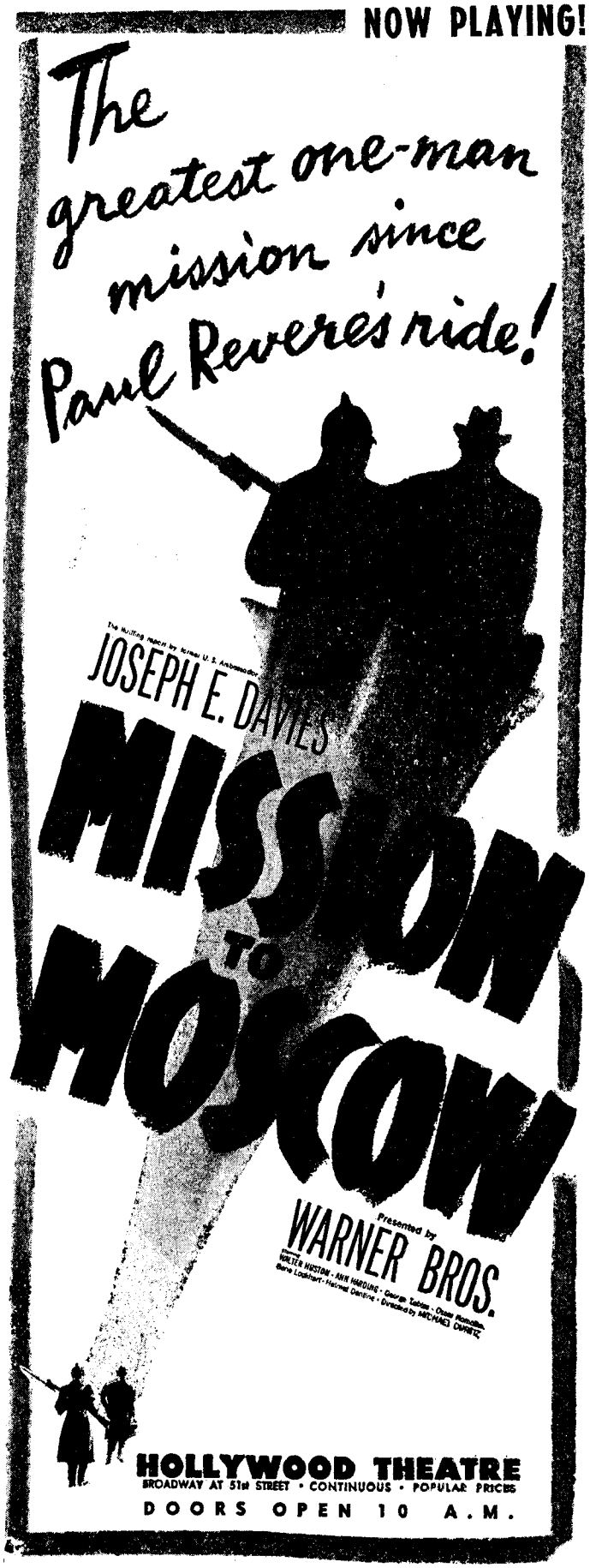
We will not decide that we intend justice until we know—as few of us know—the injustice our nation has tolerated in the past. We will not decide the immediate practical action that must be taken to create justice until we know with precision the injustice that persists in our nation today. We will not be able to direct our government until we know the history of past injustices, the condition of present injustice. That is why Carey McWilliams has written "Brothers under the Skin"—all the facts are there, the most unpleasant facts—and that is why we must read what he has written.

Statement and Understatement

WHAT would an American talk about if he had to describe in brief compass what he and his country and his countrymen were like? He might dwell on our high average living standards, our labor-saving acquisitions, our universal secondary education, our freedom from oppression, or even the way the movies and the radio influence our lives. Perhaps he would wax eloquent about developments like the TVA, although let us hope that he would fall short of the delirious heights of Harold Rugg's thus far unnoticed current performance, supposedly for adults. But the big question is whether any fair picture of the United States and its people could leave out our city and rural slums, poll taxes, sharecroppers, migratory farm labor and unjust discrimination against men and women of color.

There certainly are few shadows—and those only flitting ones—in the picture Ernest Barker has outlined of his own people. We shall turn anon to certain solid virtues he describes, but just for the record let us first cite a thoroughly British gem from the last page but one. This, after a long and highly persuasive and virtually unbroken listing of England's good points: "It is hard for a writer of British stock to set a trumpet to his lips and blow a paean in its [British democracy's] praise. He suffers from the British tendency to understatement. . . ." In one sense that is true: Mr. Barker has managed to produce a book about England and the English without one word about the rôle of the British Empire. Understatement indeed!

On the positive side, however, there are many good things convincingly adduced about our most intimate anti-Axis ally. There are the results of her undeniable genius for government. The balance between local and central authorities, independent societies and the state, the ministry in power and the official opposition, etc. There is the rule in the all-powerful House of Commons that no member of that elective body may propose an appropriation for his own constituency. And also the world-famed



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civil service open to all on the basis of talent; comprehensive competitive examinations are designed to assay a man's liberal attainments, personal interviews to gauge his fitness.

One of the curious phenomena brought out in this glowing little compendium of information is the influence of religion on the course of British politics. The state in its present form was shaped largely by two centuries of opposition between the Anglican-gentry-Tory party and the Nonconformist (Baptist, Congregational, Presbyterian and especially Wesleyan Methodist)-industrial-Liberal party. To the Nonconformists goes the credit for setting limitations to the state, although that meant full-fledged *laissez-faire* capitalism, at least in the beginning. According to the incomplete figures given, however, there are even fewer religious communicants proportionately in Great Britain than we have now in the United States. But the British still have a conscience. In any case the religious background for political division meant that votes cut across the lines of wealth and social class. This latter is also true today of the powerful Labor Party.

In the heyday of that empire, it was great to be a Roman citizen. And if normal times return before we all fall prone to exhaustion and anarchy, it may be a fine thing to be an Englishman, too. For in no other country in the world is the individual's personal liberty so protected by statute, common law and tradition. And regardless of the fate of the Beveridge plan, British Social Economy and Social Services have been developed to a point that puts us in the shade. Whether the wretched condition of the child evacuees to the country opened the eyes of the British or not, present advices point to a new national determination to secure the whole people's well-being that we should do well to emulate over here.

Off the Deep End

SINCLAIR LEWIS'S first novel in three years is a disappointment. It follows, very obviously, in the "Elmer Gantry" and "Babbitt" tradition; it is satire pure and undiluted. Yet satire, to be effective, must bear some sort of relation to truth, to a generally true weakness in human character, general enough to warrant a reader's saying, "Oh, I know that fellow—I've met him time and again." This is precisely what "Gideon Planish" does not do. You have not met him, or if you have, you have met him very infrequently indeed—so infrequently that he is not fit subject for satire. And when this happens, satire turns into a sort of sour fairy story, amusing for its enormities and whimsicalities and skillful writing, but no more.

The novel is supposed to portray the life of a professional "organization" executive, a man who earns his living soliciting money from the public for worthy "causes," most of them nebulous and many of them of a "pressure-group" variety. Perhaps its greatest weakness is that it does not distinguish between the various sorts of organizations with which this country does most certainly burgeon (and so, by the way, does every big nation that tolerates the existence of anything unofficial; London drips with them; Paris used to crawl with them). Lewis bunches them all together. Foundations, educational outfits, charities, lobbying machines in Washington are jumbled into one big basket and we are to suppose that criss-crossing through all of these, overlapping them, the same personnel sits on the boards of directors, the same executives exchange jobs, and the whole kit and boodle have one great prime thing in common—they are all dishonest rackets.

Were Gideon Planish's world the world of professional lobbyists, of that special breed of lobbyists who don't care what they lobby for and are all too available to any interest as long as there is a fee involved, this might have been a good book. For there is such a class. It is made up of broken political hacks, the Mr. Micawbers of our day, of old-time newspaper men, even of parsons without cures, and although now it is pretty well submerged in Washington by the rush of war, it will doubtless emerge with peace and start all over again.

But no. Dr. Planish begins as a professor of English (whose ignorance, by the way, is considerably overdone), becomes Dean, then goes into rural journalism, into a "Foundation" for rural education, into a sequence of organizations starting with a straight fake for the benefit of the poor Esquimaux and winding up with a weird and somehow protofascist, pro-democratic altogether strange monster held together by the funds and in the interest of an advertising tycoon.

Yet Sinclair Lewis has not lost his wizardry. Despite the emptiness, the unreality of his subject matter he has spun out a yarn to hold your interest, to amuse you. And in Peony Planish, the Dr.'s wife, he has really added a notable number to his portrait gallery—a much better number than the Dr. himself. She exists. Thousands like her exist. The very fact that you cannot sum up her character in a few words, yet that when you read of her you know you have met her, have seen her in a thousand middle-class homes—the wife of the clergyman, of the YMCA secretary, of the small college dean, of the business school professor, of the minor politician—indicates that here the author has given us a sample of his best handiwork, his deepest insight into the often shabby human heart.

More Books of the Week

Jefferson: The Road to Glory. Marie Kimball. Coward-McCann. $4.00.
Thomas Jefferson: Then and Now. A Symposium. Bill of Rights Committee. $1.50.

MRS. KIMBALL, wife of Fiske Kimball, director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, has written a curiously unsatisfactory book about the youthful Jefferson, whose personality and character somehow contrive to escape her laborious efforts—based in part upon some hitherto unpublished material of no great intrinsic importance—to fix and portray them. Nowhere do we get a clear picture of the manner of youth he was—or rather, let us say, a clearer picture than that supplied by earlier biographies. The central problem of his youth—how he acquired the opinions that led him to embark upon that "road to glory" is left undiscussed until the later part (considerably the smaller half) of the book. Mrs. Kimball does indeed, and with meticulous care, enumerate the books he ordered for his library, showing that works on political science and philosophy made relatively late appearance on his shelves. She emphasizes too his long apprenticeship in the law to that outstanding liberal, George Wythe, and notes the influence of two of his former professors at William and Mary College. But Jefferson early relinquished his interest in the law as a profession and turned to the larger field of political and social reform. Was it, as she suggests, the eloquence of Patrick Henry that caused him to turn his back upon his earlier traditions and made of him the great high-priest

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of democracy he was to become? But Jefferson was never a devotee of forensic eloquence, and it does not appear that his relations with Henry were ever very close.

Speaking of the famous Declaration she says in one of her closing paragraphs: "It was, as we have seen, the growth of years of thoughtful and persistent reading—until a complete amalgamation had been reached. It was a spontaneous outpouring of his own spirit, a burst at once of passionate feeling and lucid expression, brought into being by the mortal peril of his country." This may be accepted as the truth, while leaving us largely ignorant of the successive states of mind and feeling by means of which he had reached his position.

It is probable that no "definitive" biography of Jefferson will ever be written. Not only is his figure by far the most complex in the galaxy of the founders, but his interests are so diffused and many-sided as to leave open east-west varieties of approach. As legend accumulates about his name new curiosities develop and writers are inspired anew to satisfy them with fresh interpretations. Politician (in its better meaning) and philosopher; educator and farmer; lawyer and philanthropist; artist and inventor—his interests ranged throughout most fields of human activity—with beneficial results in not a few. Of such a figure standing on the threshold of its national life a country may well be proud and stand ready to welcome any new contribution to its knowledge. Mrs. Kimball's book, if, to the sense of the present reviewer, a little lacking in insight, is doubtless such a contribution and comes opportunely on the two hundredth anniversary of Jefferson's birth.

The small volume entitled "Thomas Jefferson: Then and Now," issued by the Bill of Rights Sesqui-Centennial Committee, is indeed a symposium, containing as it does eulogies from the pens of a large variety of worthies ranging from Douglas Faibranks, Jr., Grover Whalen, Ruth Bryan Owen to Nicholas Murray Butler, Alf Landon, Paul V. McNutt and Herbert Hoover. Many of the testimonials are of less than two pages in length. Few of them have anything new to say of this man they celebrate.

J. K. PAULDING.

The Church in Disrepute. Bernard Iddings Bell. Harper. $1.50.

THE ANGLICAN canon and writer investigates why the "Church," by which he obviously means all churches, seems to have lost its influence on society and individuals. In the latter part of his stirring and well-written book he shows the way out of the present situation. Although a great deal of what he has to say is a criticism of his own church, Catholics will sadly note that some things apply to themselves as well. In utter candor, his witty and shrewd analyses, his concise and plastic style recommend his book highly for any mature reader. It is gratifying to see a prominent clergyman of the Anglican Church take such a vigorous stand beside the new Archbishop of Canterbury and his social program. Canon Bell's occasional bows to Leo XIII and Pius XI come quite naturally to a mind as just and charitable as the author's.

His faith in democracy, however, seems to be quite shattered, for economic reasons, and he seems, like so many priests and clergymen, quite prepared to see an Anglo-Saxon version of totalitarianism arise out of the war. This defeatism is about the only objection I would like to make. If the author would look again at Mari-

"this MAN *was* IRELAND"

THE DOOM OF ROME WAS FIXED when Constantine, in 330, transferred his capital and the administrative machinery of the Empire to Byzantium, having rebuilt it and renamed it for himself. Rome, from the center of a "world empire"—a proud metropolis of 500,000—shrunk in six generations to the status of a decayed provincial capital (repeatedly looted and sacked by the barbarians) with a bare 50,000 impoverished inhabitants.

And a hundred years later it was becoming apparent that Africa also was doomed. Just two years before Patrick set out for Ireland (432) the great Augustine, that "Eagle of Doctors" had died during the siege of his cathedral city by the armies of the Vandals.

But Patrick's "mission to the West" altered the balance of things. One hundred years later a fresh, new culture was rising—in Ireland. From Ireland light and learning were beginning to spread through western Europe, carried from the Irish center by the Irish missionaries. Irish craftsmen were unequalled in Europe and it was the Irish scribes of this period who made "the world's most beautiful book"—the "Book of Kells" which is the pride of modern Ireland.

When Columcille was born (521) it was already taken as a matter of course that a promising young man of noble birth would "sojourn for a time in Ireland for the love of God and of learning." It was a remarkable century into which he was born, full of creative action and pregnant with change, and during his lifetime of 76 years there were sown the seeds whose growth would determine the course of European history for the next three hundred years.

During Colm's lifetime Justinian reconquered the Empire and codified and stabilized its laws. Columcille was eight years old when the Benedictine Rule was born at Monte Cassino, and seven years before his death the great Gregory began his Pontificate. (One year after Colm's death Gregory would send the other Augustine to Canterbury to make *angels* of the *Angles*!)

In the East this century saw the building (537) in Constantinople of the great church of Santa Sofia (now for some six centuries a Mohammedan mosque). In 571 Mohammed was born (Columcille was 50 at the time and well established in Iona.) This century also saw the introduction of Buddhism into Japan.

When Colm was 25 he opened his first church and school "amid the oak trees of Calgaich . . . in sight of the salt main in which the seagulls cry." The landscape and culture of his time have all the simplicity and beauty of the heroic age and recall, even to details, the Greece of Homer and the Odyssey. Irish archaeology has done much in the last 50 years to restore the *minutiae* of the period. We now know what they ate and wore, what their boats and houses and weapons were like, as well as much of their manners and customs.

And Robert Farren has known what to do with such materials. He is a "true scholar and poet:" a "seer" and a "maker" in the great tradition, with the gift for the creative phrase ("grumbling and twanging harps"—"Sense, like a string, she stirs"—"Mercy's the child of delight") and of extreme vigor and versatility. (His "Poet's Curse" and "Literary Conversation" recall—without resembling—the great Belloc in his most sardonic vein, and the Gaelic Wit equals the Gallic Master!)

In Ireland Farren is accepted as the greatest living Irish poet, both in the English and Gaelic tongues. (He is Roibeard O Farachain). In this country he is most widely known for his "Immolation" (. . . "in this White Host") which has already found a place in the best anthologies (and which will, we believe, ultimately find for itself a place in the Liturgy also.)

"THIS MAN WAS IRELAND: The Song of Columcille, the First Exile" is a narrative poem made up of more than 70 lyrics into which all our knowledge of Colm (and of the legends and traditions as well) has been gathered—informed and transformed by the Poet's eye.

We believe the publication of this book to be a literary event of the greatest importance. Robert Farren is an Irishman: he understands Columcille and he knows Ireland. And as he says, Columcille *was* Ireland. And today—after 1400 years—*Ireland is Columcille.*

*"And Colm heard all this praying * as the shadow of the glorified body * as a changing of body to spirit * as a change of one world to another * as a penetration with Godhead * as perpetual levitation * as conversation in Heaven . . ."*

"THIS MAN WAS IRELAND: the Song of Columcille, the First Exile," by Robert Farren. Price, $3.00.

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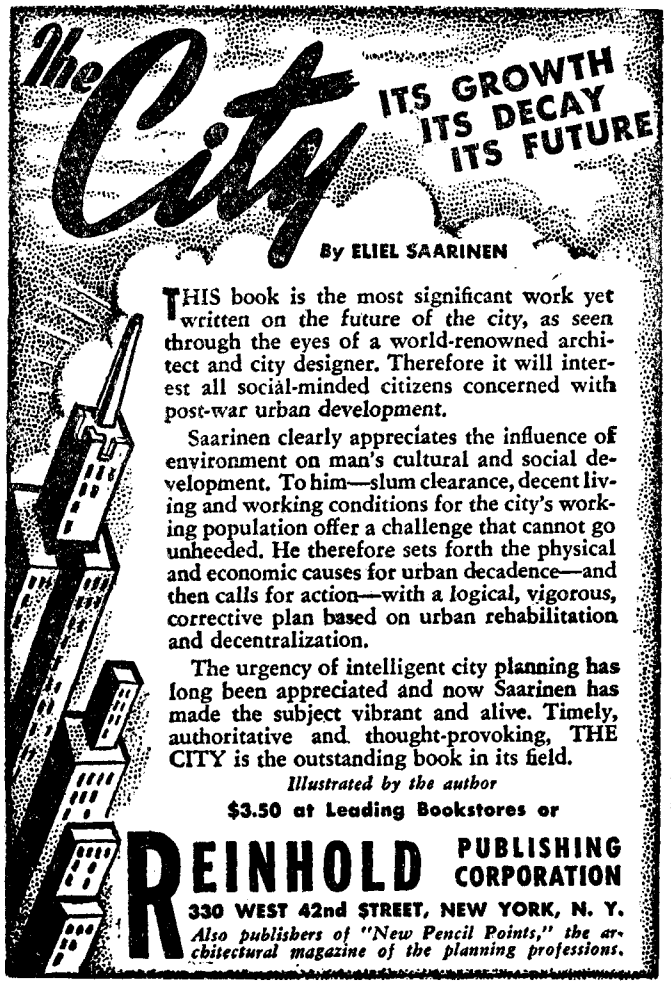
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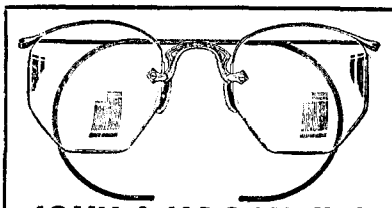

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tain's "True Humanism," with which he has so many other things in common, he would find that he succumbs to a mentality which by now can be called "Pétainism," but which spelled the knell of Christian freedom in Germany, Italy, Austria, long before Pétain exploited his own country's downfall for his pseudo-religious "reconstruction." There is obviously a temptation to the honest and thoughtful Christians of our day to turn their *confiteor* into an abject acceptance of flagellation by "medicine men" riding on that obsolete "wave of the future." Equally honest but more thoughtful men like Maritain stand by the banner of freedom.

Canon Bell's book is full of shrewd aphorisms and striking observations, especially those on the shallow faith in progress, the rôle of ecclesiastical authority in great spiritual movements, the dangers of a clerical mind and the current misconceptions of the laity, of what makes a good clergyman. His chapter, "What of Children," is a gem. Always keeping in mind that the author is not a Catholic, priests and educators may draw profit from this great little book.

H. A. REINHOLD.

Looking Back at Futurism. Rosa Trillo Clough. E. Weyhe. $3.00.

AMERICANS first had a general report on futurism when James Huneker, the same season as the Armory Show, sent back an essay on it from Europe. Today, 30 years later, futurism seems almost more distant than that First World war which it antedated. Yet the present book by Rose Trillo Clough is the first thorough discussion of the movement in English.

Who were the futurists and what did they want? Essentially they were literally men who objected to the past and proclaimed the advent of a new order. This they did on general principles, though they listed definite procedures toward that end. Periods and punctuation were to be abandoned, syntax scrapped, verbs discarded. Henceforth literature should be liberated by a total adherence to substantives. In painting, conventional perspective was to be replaced by force-lines, so that, for example, a car in motion would be depicted as multiple wheels and chassis—this under the impression, apparently, that the spectator would then be "carried" with it. As for sculpture, moving planes must somehow incorporate the very fluxions of nature. Architecture should come to resemble a Hugh Ferriss vision of the future. Even scenic-designing should be renovated. Then the milennium would arrive with a wholesale flourish.

What resulted from these emanations? Very little. Antedating World War I were the competent, confetti-like canvases of Severini, still crisp and lively today. Also certain sculptures by Boccioni, which suggest movement and collision. Possibly also the post-war paintings of Carrá, which, despite a certain laxity, did display a modicum of personality. Certainly not impressive results, considering all the publicity.

Miss Clough's book rather confines itself to the specific pronunciamentos of this group. She has examined them all. And she has pointed out their limitations. Her work would seem to be inclusive, although one regrets the omission of Joseph Stella, American Futurist whose *Brooklyn Bridge* of some 25 years ago still soars with all the majesty of a great conception. This exception aside, the book is terse and readable, capably organized, and a fit repository for all that we need to know about the subject.

JEROME MELLQUIST.

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The Inner Forum

French Catholics Resist

REPORTS from occupied Europe indicate operations of strong underground movements. In France, according to Georgette Vignaux in the April issue of the *Review of Politics,* Catholic resistance to Nazism finds two main channels of expression. One of these is a series of secret publications of which perhaps the most important are the *Cahiers du Témoignage Chrétien;* the last two issues attained a circulation of 25,000 copies. One of these, "The Rights of Man and of the Christian," brings together a number of "religious witnesses against the Hitlerian régime: two addresses of Pius XII to the world—one at Christmas, 1941, and the other on the occasion of his episcopal jubilee, May 14, 1942—expressing the anguish and the hope of the Christian world; the courageous letter of Cardinal Van Roey [of Malines, Belgium], to his Excellency General von Falkenhausen; a long exposé of the Kulturkampf in Germany and of Catholic resistance, with the complete text of the sermon of Cardinal Faulhaber of December 31, 1941; and of the collective letter of the German episcopate of June 11, 1942, which the *Cahier* called 'an act of lucidity and spiritual courage which might have reversed the situation had it been issued sooner.' "

CIP *Correspondence* carries a dispatch from Lisbon to the effect that Catholic opposition has been so stalwart that French socialists now cooperate in resisting particularly in northern France. CIP credits those who were once associated with *Esprit* and with *Sept* with the leadership in the underground movement. It quotes the *Cahiers*: "If in the present confusion of minds and disturbance of consciences, in face of the weak submission of too many people of whom more dignity was to be expected, we feel ourselves united with all those who do not resign themselves to let France be degraded, that is because patriotism is a virtue and Christian faithfulness and national honor are intimately associated."

The crux of the union opposition to the Vichy régime was on the principle of freedom of association, Catholic labor leaders holding out for independence and pluralism as against a single compulsory workers' organization. This is also true of the youth movement where the JOC has also been forced underground. It is estimated that before the Germans took over the whole of France there were some 300,000 JOC members in the occupied zone. And in this unrelenting Catholic resistance Archbishop Saliège of Toulouse "has unceasingly maintained . . . the integrity of a doctrine which admits of no compromise or opportunism."

CONTRIBUTORS

Jacques MARITAIN'S new book on the natural law is soon to be published by Scribners.
Albert EISELE is a dirt farmer and rural columnist.
Tim O'BRIEN was long associated with the *Catholic Worker,* and is now in Colorado.
Geoffrey JOHNSON is an English poet.
J. K. PAULDING is a New Yorker interested in political and social history.
Rev. H. A. REINHOLD is doing parochial work in Yakima, Wash.
Jerome MELLQUIST is a New York art critic.

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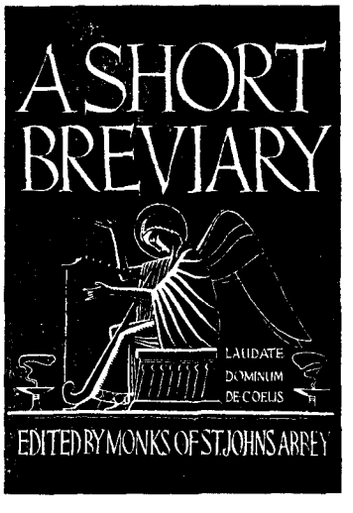

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